



About Us

As Kansas City's Botanical Garden, Powell Gardens plays a vital role in the community as a space for release, rejuvenation, and the celebration of the fleeting nature of nature itself. Visitors enjoy themed display gardens, a three-mile nature trail, seasonal festivals, rotating exhibitions, and exceptional architecture. Established in 1988, Powell Gardens is a public garden, maintaining 970 acres of lush, rolling hills and windswept meadows, with more than 175 acres and a large collection of plants open to the public for education, exploration, and recreation. The organization's mission is to provide an inspiring experience that fosters an appreciation for the vital role plants play in our lives. As a prominent community treasure, Powell Gardens is committed to preserving natural beauty and advancing environmental education. Powell Gardens has recently acquired a secondary location that is a Retail Garden Center named Powell Gardens Colonial Farms located in Blue Springs, Missouri. This site broadens the area and audience reached by the Powell Gardens mission to provide education and celebration of plants in our lives.

We at Powell believe that our team members are our most important asset. By building strong relationships with each other, we can ensure that our guests have the best possible experience. If you thrive in a fast paced environment where you drive a business through strategy and collaboration while leading others and want to leave your mark in the gardening world, Powell Gardens Colonial Farms would like to meet you! Come experience our new location and join our team of experts as we spread the love of plants.

Summary

The Operations Director for Powell Gardens Colonial Farms is a mission-driven operational leader responsible for unifying day-to-day excellence with long-range strategic planning across a dynamic retail garden center and wholesale agricultural operation. This role ensures that Colonial Farms delivers on Powell Gardens' core mission of education, environmental stewardship, and community engagement while achieving strong net income performance across retail, wholesale, and agritourism channels. The Operations Director develops leaders, strengthens operational systems, and ensures the site remains a thriving extension of Powell Gardens' commitment to connecting people with nature and sustainable agriculture.

Essential Functions

1. Operational Leadership & Execution

- Oversee all daily operations across retail garden center, wholesale production, agritourism, and on-site experiences such as festivals, workshops, and signature events
- Maintain a strong, visible presence across the site, coaching leaders, supporting frontline teams, and ensuring consistent execution of merchandising, inventory flow, customer service, and facility standards
- Ensure operational readiness for seasonal peaks, educational programming, and community events that reflect Powell Gardens' mission
- Implement efficient, scalable systems that support accuracy, safety, and high-quality guest experiences
- Develop strong collaborative relationships with leaders across the company and within industry

2. Leader Engagement & Team Development

- Directly lead department managers and supervisors, fostering a culture of accountability, empowerment, and mission-aligned service.
- Conduct regular coaching, walk-throughs, and performance reviews to strengthen leadership capability and operational consistency
- Maintain weekly team meetings to discuss performance, goals, and challenges
- Plan and guide quarterly pulse meetings to set goals, evaluate strategic plan for the site
- Build succession plans and training pathways to develop future leaders across retail, wholesale, and educational programming
- Champion a people-first culture that reflects Powell Gardens' values of stewardship, learning, and community connection

3. Strategic Planning

- Maintain awareness of the competitive landscapes, opportunities for expansion, customer acquisition, market needs, and new industry developments and standards
- Create strategic & long-term plans with CEO
- Determine annual goals and then make those goals a reality through strategic action with team members
- Use data, KPIs, and guest insights to guide decision-making and measure the impact of operational strategies
- Collaborate with senior leadership team to drive company vision, operational strategy, and annual budget
- Collaborate with senior leadership in support of company vision, operational strategy, fiscal responsibilities, educational programs, regenerative agriculture projects, facility improvements, and expanded community offerings
- Ensure alignment between retail operations, wholesale production, marketing, education, and finance to support unified organizational goals
- Stay informed of and understand all aspects of retail business, wholesale, farming and management, including regulations, organizational policies, possible new technologies, and best practices

4. Budget/P&L

- Own operational components of the P&L with a focus on EBITDA improvement through labor optimization, margin protection, inventory accuracy, and cost control
- Accountable for the locations Profit & Loss (P&L) performance by monitoring departmental budgets along with departmental managers and COO
- Analyze market trends to inform inventory decisions and boost sales
- Partner with Finance to forecast, track, and analyze performance across retail, wholesale, and agritourism revenue streams
- Identify opportunities to streamline workflows, reduce waste, and improve profitability without compromising mission-driven programming or guest experience
- Align operational decisions with revenue goals, seasonal trends, and long-term sustainability.

5. Board Governance Responsibilities

- Prepare operational reports, financial updates, and strategic recommendations for the CEO and Board of Directors
- Participate in board committee meetings as needed, providing clear, data-driven insights into operational performance, mission impact, and resource needs
- Ensure operational decisions support Powell Gardens' nonprofit mission, donor expectations, and stewardship responsibilities
- Collaborate with development and education teams to support grant-funded initiatives, community partnerships, and mission-aligned programming

6. Customer Experience & Brand Standards

- Ensure a welcoming, educational, and mission-aligned guest experience across all touchpoints—from plant shopping to workshops to seasonal festivals
- Maintain brand integrity through high standards in merchandising, signage, product quality, and staff engagement
- Respond to customer feedback with urgency and professionalism, ensuring continuous improvement

7. Inventory Management

- Oversee end-to-end inventory management for both retail and wholesale operations, ensuring accuracy, availability, and alignment with seasonal demand
- Implement and maintain inventory systems that support forecasting, purchasing, receiving, production planning, and shrink control
- Partner with horticulture, production, and merchandising teams to plan crop schedules, product assortments, and inventory flow that support both revenue and mission-driven programming
- Monitor inventory KPIs—including turns, shrink, aging, and margin impact—and adjust strategies to optimize financial performance
- Ensure accurate inventory counts, timely reconciliation, and strong controls across greenhouses, nursery yards, retail floor, and warehouse spaces
- Lead continuous improvement efforts to reduce waste, improve product quality, and strengthen the connection between production planning and retail demand

8. Compliance, Safety & Risk Management

- Oversee compliance with safety protocols, environmental regulations, and HR policies across greenhouse, nursery, retail, and farm environments
- Lead incident response, root-cause analysis, and corrective action planning
- Ensure safe, accessible, and mission-aligned experiences for guests, staff, volunteers, and program participants

Success Looks Like

- Highly engaged leaders who operate with accountability, mission alignment, and operational excellence
- Strong net revenue performance driven by efficient operations, optimized labor, accurate inventory, and disciplined cost control
- Seamless seasonal transitions and well-executed educational and community programs
- A retail and agritourism environment that delights guests and reflects Powell Gardens' values of education, sustainability, and community engagement
- A garden center operation that delivers accurate, timely, high-quality products to wholesale, retail, and external partners
- Strong, transparent communication with the CEO and Board, supporting informed governance and mission-aligned growth

Experience/Education

- Bachelor's degree in Business related area *Preferred*
- High School Diploma or GED Required
- 7-10+ years of equivalent experience in a top level (Manager, VP, President, Director) role leading people and teams, driving strategy and revenue *Required*
- Exceptional competency in strategic planning, business building and financial acumen *Required*
- **Working knowledge of Microsoft office products including Outlook, Word and Teams** *Required*.
- Familiarity with inventory systems *Required*
- Experience in Agriculture, Garden Center, Retail or related industry/field *Required*

- Ability to adopt new technologies
- Process and Procedure oriented
- Valid Driver's License *Required*

Physical Requirements/Work Environment

Must be able to lift 50lbs (team lifting as necessary); accomplish strenuous work on an ongoing basis in various conditions, including extreme heat and cold; perform administrative work in an office setting; ability to work weekends; evenings and holidays as required. Travel to trade shows, workshops or events as required.

Disclaimer Statement:

- *Every effort has been made to make your job description as complete as possible. However, this position description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee occupying this position. Employees will be required to follow any other job-related instructions and to perform any other duties requested by their department supervisor.*

Benefits

Medical/Dental/Vision

Retirement Plan

Employer Paid Life Insurance

Employer Paid Short Term and Long Term Disability Insurance

Generous PTO Plan

To Apply

Applicants interested in the Director of Retail Operations position must submit the following to hr@powellgardens.org.

- Cover letter addressing the following:
 - What is your experience with retail management and revenue generation strategy?
 - Explain your interest in the Powell Gardens organization
- Resume
- Three references: professional, academic, and/or personal

To view the full job description, please go to <https://powellgardens.org/careers-at-powell-gardens/>